No tenant set for Heilig-Meyers

By JOEL KERTOK
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Rumors that Heilig-Meyers, the furniture store at 1819 South Main St. that is in the process of closing will be replaced by its sister company The Room Store are not true, according to Heilig-Meyers Store Manager Bob Allen.

Heilig-Meyers owns The Room Store, which was originally going to replace the closing Weatherford business. Heilig-Meyers filed bankruptcy in August 2000.

Allen and the current employees would have continued to run the store, he said.

"There were about 35 Heilig-Meyers stores that were scheduled in the first round of conversion to The Room Store," he said. "We were scheduled for the second round. Well, the first round of stores made it, but the second round of stores did not make it. So we are out of jobs."

Allen said the shut down came as a surprise, with him finding out by a message on the computer.

"They closed down 400 stores back at that time and we thought they were just getting rid of the stores that were not making profit, so we thought we were safe," he said. "Now they have announced that all remaining Heilig-Meyers must close, and we are all under liquidation right now."

Heilig-Meyers furniture store is in the process of liquidating, as the company is going out of business. Store management said the store will likely be open until the end of July or early August.

JOEL KERTOK/
DEMOCRAT PHOTO

Allen said the liquidation process with Heilig-Meyers will likely end in late July or August.

"They are continuing to send us truck loads of merchandise from our distribution centers," he said.

Heilig-Meyers currently employees 10 people. All but Allen and assistant manager Jennifer Werner are temporary employees and have already found other jobs, according to Werner.

Things will not be as easy for Allen, who recently transferred to the store from another Heilig-Meyers in Brownwood just before the closing announcement was made.

"We are out of a job and I just transferred here," Allen said. "I relocated up here and signed a lease, and then two weeks later, all of the sudden, we have got this message on our computers. So I am out here stuck."

Wal-Mart owns the building, and has hired United Commercial Reality with Brent Glover of Town Square Real Estate to find a new business to lease the store and the space next to Heilig-Meyers.

Glover said he does have a few leads on the space located next to Heilig-Meyers, and the Heilig-Meyers building is on the market.

"It is available, and we would love to negotiate a lease right now," Glover said. "I think Weatherford is a booming enough market that I think someone will come along."